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MISSIONARIES

AND

THEIR WORK.

Is it a Failure?

Why I believe in Foreign Missions.

BY

HON. DAVID J. BREWER

AND

HON. J. W. FOSTER, L.L.D.

REV. H. LOOMIS,
AGENT
AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY,
YOKOHAMA, JAPAN.

John F. Goucher
No.

Missionaries and Their Work

There is much difference of opinion in regard to the subject of missionaries and missions in the East; and it is asserted by some that the men are "utterly unqualified" and their work "a failure."

The following statements are made by men who are informed on the subject, are competent to judge, and whose opinions are worthy of the highest confidence.

Hon. Charles Denby, United States Minister to China from 1885 to 1898, says.

"I made a study of missionary work in China. I took a man-of-war and visited almost every open port in the empire. At each one of these places I visited and inspected every missionary station. At the schools the scholars were arrayed before me and examined. I went through the missionary hospitals. I attended synods and church services. I saw the missionaries, ladies and gentlemen, in their homes. I saw them all, Catholic and Protestant, and I have the same opinion of them all. They are all doing good work; they merit all the support that philanthropy can give them.

"I do not stint my commendation, or halt or stammer about work that ought to be done at home instead of abroad. I make no comparisons.

I unqualifiedly, and in the strongest language that tongue can utter, give to these men and women who are living and dying in China and in the far East my full and unadulterated commendation. My doctrine is to tell, if I can, the simple truth about them, and when that is known, the caviling, the depreciation, the sneering which too often accompany comments on missionary work will disappear; and they will stand before the world as they ought to stand, as benefactors of the people among whom their lives are spent and forerunners of the commerce of the world."

Hon. John Barrett, late United States Minister to Siam, says:

"The King of Siam, who is admittedly one of the ablest statesmen in Asia, once said to me that the American missionaries had done more to advance the welfare of his country and people than any other foreign influence. He has confirmed that statement by pursuing a most friendly course towards the missionaries and assisting them, both financially and morally.

"From careful study of the scope of missionary labor, not only in Siam but in China and Japan, during a period of nearly six years, I am convinced beyond question that the missionaries are doing a great and good work for the advancement of both the moral and material interests of these Asiatic lands.

"The explanation of much of the anti-missionary talk is found in the superficial gossip of the

treaty ports of Asia. The average traveller hears this talk and goes away with a prejudiced opinion. On the other hand, those who study carefully the work of the missionaries, not only in the treaty ports but in the interior, and weigh carefully in the balance all adverse and favorable conditions, agree that the missionary field should not be limited, but rather extended.

"When we criticise the methods of missionary zeal, we should be no less severe in our censure of the methods of commercial exploitation. If the former leads, occasionally, to the development of ignorant anti-foreign feeling in the interior, the latter too often is the cause of intense anti-foreign agitation, fostered by the unwarranted seizures of territory and ports by foreign nations.

"America's supreme effort in non-Christian lands beyond her borders, must be for the conservation of the allied forces of Christianity and commerce, which are the handmaidens of civilization the wide world over."

Hon. George F. Seward, formerly Consul-General and subsequently, from 1876 to 1880, Minister to China:

"I have seen a good deal of criticism in print, statements made by various individuals, of the missionaries in China. It has even been said that they should have stayed at home, and that their presence is largely responsible for the outbreak in China. These critics make too much of missionary work as a cause of trouble. There are missionaries who are iconoclasts, but

this is not their spirit in great measure. They are men of education and judgment. They depend upon spiritual weapons and good works. For every enemy a missionary makes he makes fifty friends. The one enemy may arouse an ignorant rabble to attack him.

"During my twenty years' stay in China I always congratulated myself on the fact that the missionaries were there. There were good men and able men among the merchants and officials, but it was the missionary who exhibited the foreigner in benevolent work, as having other aims than those which may justly be called selfish. The good done by missionaries in the way of education, of medical relief, and of other charities, cannot be over-estimated. If in China there were none other than missionary influences, the upbuilding of that great people would go forward securely.

"During the twenty years that I was endeavouring to serve our government and people in China not an American missionary suffered death from the violence of the Chinese. I have the profoundest admiration for the missionary as I have known him in China. He is a power for good and peace, not for evil."

The Hon. John W. Foster, formerly Secretary of State of the United States, subsequently Counselor of the Chinese Government, says:

"It would take more space than I can devote in this article to show that the presence of missionaries in China had little to do with the

troubles. My observation is that the mass of the people of China do not object to their presence and work. In almost all instances the opposition and riots against them have been stirred up by the literati, the office holders and the office seekers.

"After two visits to China five and six years ago, I said that I regarded China as the most hopeful field for mission work in the world. The disorders, the murder of missionaries, and the destruction of mission properties, have not changed my opinion. Out of all the disasters will come peace and order, a better government and more efficient protection, and a wider door for the entrance of Christian teachers.

"China stands in great need of Christianity. The teachings of Confucius, among the wisest of non-Christian philosophers, have had unlimited sway for twenty-five centuries; and this highest type of pagan ethics has produced a people the most superstitious and a government the most corrupt and inefficient. Confucianism must be pronounced a failure. The hope of this people and its government is in Christianity."

President James B. Angell, LL.D., Minister of the United States to China, 1880-1881, says:

"Some very exaggerated statements concerning the part which the presence of Christian missionaries has played in causing the disturbances in China have been made by writers who could not have been familiar with the facts, or who are prejudiced against the missionaries.

As there are more missionaries in the interior than foreigners of any other class, more demonstrations have been made against them than against other foreigners. But engineers and consular officers, and finally the Legations have been attacked.

"By their hospitals and schools the missionaries have made many friends among Chinese who have not adopted Christianity. It is the established policy of the missionaries to pursue a conciliatory course, to imbue their disciples with loyalty to the government, with a love of peace and order. My opinion is that missionary activities alone would not have involved foreign powers in any serious trouble with China. There is no evidence that the difficulties arising from this cause have recently been any graver than they have been for many years. But when it appeared to the Chinese that the European powers wished to seize their territory, they were led to make an indiscriminate warfare on all foreigners, and on all Chinese who attached themselves to them."

Hon. John Goodnow, Consul-General at Shanghai, when speaking of the value of missionaries during his last home visit, confessed to some misgiving on his own part when he went to China, as to the permanent value of foreign missionaries, but facts had compelled him to a change of view, and without any attempt at eloquence; he made facts eloquent in a statement and defence of the surpassing value to China and

the world of the labours of the missionary body.

Hon. J. R. Jernigan, U.S. Consul-General, Shanghai, says:

"There are about eleven hundred American missionaries in China, representing the Protestant Churches of the United States, and following their respective callings in the different provinces of the Empire. Many of these missionaries I know personally, and I have visited some at their homes and attended the services they conduct in their chapels. They need no witness to testify in their behalf. Their work is not done in a corner; all can see it, and those who go to learn the truth and will speak and write it are the best witnesses to the Christian character of the missionary and the efficiency of his work.

"My experience as a United States official in Japan and China covers a period of six years, and during that period no case has come before me for advice or settlement, involving directly or indirectly the interest of the Christian churches, when it has ever been made to appear that the missionaries were not influenced in their conduct by the highest principles of right and humanity.

"There ought to be no patience with the sentiment that goes out to the great outer world, which is separated by the seas from this ancient Empire, depreciating missionaries and missionary work. It is a sentiment that does not commend those who indulge in it, and cannot be supported

by evidence that would be admissible in any court of justice.

Wherever an American mission chapel may be found in China there the words of Christ are taught; and around the home altars of American missionaries, the Christian virtues are practiced and the customs and teachings of home inculcated. . . . . It should be remembered that the ensign of commerce follows close in the wake of the banner of the cross, and he who would strike down the hand that carries the latter injures the interest of the former."

In this connection the opinions of the Chinese is also important. The former Governor of Shantung Province, Yuan Shi-kai (the ablest and most influential man in China), said in a letter to the missionaries, encouraging their return to their stations:—"You, Reverend Sirs, have been preaching in China many years; and, without exception, have exhorted men concerning righteousness. Your church customs are strict and correct. In establishing your customs you have been careful to see that Chinese law has been observed. How then can it be said that there is disloyalty."

Rev. W. M. Hayes, D.D., of the Tungchow Presbyterian College was chosen by His Excellency Yuan Shih-kai to be the head of the University at Chinan-fu.

In a Proclamation issued on the 11th of October, 1901 the Governor of Shansi says, "I, the

Governor, having made myself acquainted with the facts, find that the chief work of the Christian religion is in all places to exhort men to live virtuously. From the time of their entrance into China Christian missionaries have given medicine gratuitously to the sick and distributed money in times of famine. They regard other men as they do themselves, and make no difference between this country and that. Yet we Chinese have treated them with injustice and contempt for which we ought to feel ashamed. Contrasting the way in which we have been treated by the missionaries with our treatment of them how can any one who has the least regard for right and reason not feel ashamed of this behaviour? How strangely singular it is that we Chinese, followers of the Confucian religion, should not appreciate right actions, which recall the words and the discourses of Confucius, where he says, "Men should respond with kindness to another's kind actions! "By so doing we allow those who follow the Christian religion to stand alone in showing what is true goodness in our part?"

In an "Open Letter to the British Public," prepared by the leaders of a Reform Party among the Chinese, there occurs the following, "You have been told, both officially and privately, that the whole Boxer trouble was directly or indirectly occasioned by foreign missionaries and their converts, This is absolutely false. Your missionaries, if left to themselves, will make many

more friends than enemies in China, It is charged that by their indiscrest acts they have stirred up the wrath of the Celestials against them. I beg leave to tell you that this is not the fact. I cannot recall having heard that in a single case the charge against them has been substantiated and brought home to the offenders. It is easy, of course, to make criticisms, especially when the accuser wishes to find some excuse for his hatred of the accused, but the public want absolute and tangible proof before they will give their credence and judgment."

On the month of November, 1901 the Rev. Griffith John, D.D., of Hankow, was informed that His Excellency Chang Chi-tung would be glad to see him. At an interview which took place subsequently Dr. John reports:—"We had some interesting conversation on missionary matters. I endeavoured to place the principles and policy of the Protestant Church in China before him in as clear light as possible, and he expressed himself as perfectly satisfied."

His Excellency also called upon Rev. W. A. P. Martin, D.D., LL.D. (who was for more than thirty years President of the Imperial University at Peking) and talked with him over two hours on educational matters. The services of Dr. Martin were requested in the establishment of a new university at Nanking, and he has been engaged as a lecturer in the Normal college for Mandarins.

When the Foreign Allies and the representa-

tives of the Chinese Government met in Peking in 1901 to devise terms of peace, the Chinese Plenipotentiaries, Prince Ching and His Excellency Li Hung-chang, wrote to the British Plenipotentiary, Sir Ernest Satow, to invite Rev. Timothy Richard, D.D., LL.D., to go up and arrange about the settlement of the troubles in Shansi. The plan proposed by Dr. Richard was not only adopted but various delegations waited upon him to ask his assistance in the establishment of schools and colleges in other provinces. For the support of the work which is being carried on by Dr. Richard, the Viceroy Chang Chih-tung sent a third contribution of $3,000, the Governor of Kiangsu province sent $1,000, the Governor of Kiangsi province sent $500, and the provincial Judge of Chihli sent Taels 500.

At a public dinner given in New York City on the 2nd of Feb. to the Chinese Commissioners Viceroy Tuan, Governor of Hupeh, spoke as follows, "We take pleasure this evening in bearing testimony to the part taken by American missionaries in promoting the progress of the Chinese people. They have borne the light of Western civilization into every nook and corner of the Empire. They have rendered inestimable service to China by the laborious task of translating into the Chinese language religious and scientific works of the West. They help us to bring happiness and comfort to the poor and the suffering by the establishment of hospitals and schools. The awakening of China, which now seems to be at

hand, may be traced in no small measure to the hand of the missionary. For this service you will find China not ungratful."

An application has been made to the Agent of the American Bible Society at Shanghai, by one of the professors in a government college, for a grant of fifty English Bibles for the use of the students. The author writes, "I told my superiors here that the main difference between the Chinese classics and the Bible is, that the teaching of the one is superficial, and the other deep seated; one is seed sown on stony ground, and the other on good ground. I have thought upon the present condition of poor China, over and over again, and always came to the conclusion that we need Bibles more than anything—guns, machinery, and what not.".

Why I Believe in Foreign Missions.

BY HON. DAVID J. BREWER

JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT. U.S.A.

"I believe in foreign missions because Christianity is adapted to the most urgent needs of man, so uplifting in its influence on individuals and nations as to carry evidences that it is of Divine origin, and that it was designed not for one race or age only, but for all time and for all men.

I believe in them because the work not only blesses those to whom the missions go, but those by whom they are established and supported.

The reflex influence on the latter is no small item, and it is universally true that they who are most devoted to the cause of missions, most interested in the work, give to it the most earnest support, are the finest types of Christian character. 'He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it."

"I believe in them not merely because of the reflex influence on individual character, but because of the standing they will give to this American republic in the sight of the world. As a citizen, I love my country, and long to see her the recognized leader among the nations. That is possible only as she touches them in the most helpful and uplifting way. Mere display of strength is not sufficient. We may stand in wholesome awe of the prize fighter, but we do not love him. So it is that foreign missions are more significant than battleships. The Gospel is better than the "big stick" for the influence and glory of the republic.

"And, finally, I believe in them because the Master so commanded. 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature' was a command not alone to the immediate auditors, His then disciples, but one going with His religion to every one in all ages of the world. Obedience to that command is duty done, and will surely bring a blessing. Like mercy,

'It is twice bless'd:
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes."

BY HON. JOHN W. FOSTER

EX-SECRETARY OF STATE WASHINGTON, D.C.

"First, the great purpose for which the Christian Church was founded is to carry the Gospel to all mankind. I can not comprehend why any one who has accepted Christ as his Savior can fail to desire that all his fellow men shall enjoy the same blessing. . . .

Second, the Christian missionaries sent out from Rome found our forefathers in Britain and Northern Europe in the most degraded state of barbarism, superstition, and idolatry. But for their self-sacrifice and devotion, we might now be in the same state of degradation and savagry. To me it never ceases to be a marvel that people who are themselves the rich beneficiaries of Christian missions can refuse to support the foreign missionary societies of their churches.

Third, I believe in foreign missions because it has been my good fortune to visit the most important mission lands, and have informed myself from personal observation of the work of the American missionaries in those countries. I found them earnest, faithful, and, as a whole well fitted for their work,—a noble band of devoted men and women; the men, as a rule, fully the intellectual equal of their ministerial brethren at home. I found also that the results of their labors were as successful as could be reasonably expected under the circumstances.

Fourth, the most promising fields for the work

of Christian missionaries to-day are China and Japan. I believe in pushing foreign missions in those lands, because our country is in large measure responsible for the present situation in the Far East. It was the aggressive commercial policy of the United States, as manifested in Commodore Perry's fleet, that forced Japan out of her seclusion, and set her upon the road to that transformation which is to-day the admiration and wonder of the world. It was the United States which first exacted from China the recognition in a treaty of the right to disseminate Christianity in that great empire. In these last days it has been the diplomacy of the United States which has set the influences at work to stay the march of the territorial spoiler and secure the autonomy of the Chinese Empire.

Verily, the fields are white to harvest, and a cry comes across the Pacific to the Christians of the United States, louder than that which came to the apostle from Macedonia: 'Come over and help us!'"

In a recent speech at Cambridge by Sir Ernest Satow he paid a high tribute to Christian missions. In the course of his remarks he said that after 45 years of diplomatic experience in difference parts of the world he could assert that missions had reaped a measure of success that was astonishing. Therefore he deprecated the attitude of society towards them. He had had most faithful servants from among the mission converts, and he knew that the

assertion that they were all scamps was absurd.

Speaking of Christian missions in the East Mr. F. A. Mckenzie of the London Daily Mail says, "One of the most striking things in the missionary position now is the way in which the confidence of the official has been won. In Liaoyang after the great battle between the Russians and the Japanese, I found that the chief Chinese magistrate had handed over the work of relieving distress to the well known missionary. Dr. Westwater. The magistrate gave the buildings and gave money, and the doctor did the work. "Why do not you Chinese do this yourselves?" I asked, "The magistrate knows that if he gave the money to his own assistants they would keep most of it themselves" came the reply. "He knows that the doctor will spend all of it on the people."

For many years the missionaries did hard pioneer work with very little to show. Less than seventy years ago they had only six converts. To-day they have about a hundred and forty thousand communicants, which means about six hundred thousand adherents. But their work is not to be measured by their enrolled converts. They have been the pioneers battering down prejudices and misunderstandings. They have shown the people what the West is and what Western civilization means. They brought modern medical knowl-

edge to China, and China is now adopting it; they brought western learning; they started and pushed the campaign which is abolishing foot binding, and they are responsible for the fight against opium. They have been not only the teachers of religion but the advance agents of civilization.

To me it seems that in the missionary movement in China to day we have, despite mistakes, misunderstandings, and a proportion of unsuitable men, one of the most splendid exhibitions of Anglo-Saxon altruism the world has ever seen.

The Chinese Convert.

By Mrs. Isabella Bird Bishop.

In the course of two years I traveled 8,000 miles in Inland China, and, in the course of these journeys, visited seventy-three mission stations. Everywhere small, ofttimes very small, communities of persons have been formed, who by their abandonment of ancestral worship and idolatrous social customs were subjected to a social ostracism, and who, partly in consequence, clung together as brethren with a tenacity similar to that which finds its secular expression in the powerful Chinese organizations known as guilds.

These converts live pure and honest lives; they are teachable, greedy of Bible knowledge, generous and self-denying for Christian purposes, and so anxious to preserve the purity of their brotherhood that it would be impossible for such abuses as disfigured the Church of Corinth to find a place in the infant churches of China.

Above all, every true convert becomes a missionary, and it is in this spirit of propagandism that the hope for the future lies. After eight and a half years of journeying among Asiatic peoples, I say, unhesitatingly, that the raw material out of which the Holy Ghost fashions the Chinese convert, and ofttimes the Chinese martyr, is the best stuff in Asia.